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WASHINGTON, D.C. 20506

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NSC Declassification/Release Instructions on File

Mr. Bronson Tweedy
Office of the Director
Central Intelligence
Washington, D. C. 20505

Dear Bronson:

The terms of reference you circulated at the last meeting cover most aspects of the NSCIC Working Group very well. Certainly they describe the current operation of the Working Group. However, I have a few problems to raise.

First I have one small change to suggest on page 3, item c (2). I would make it read as follows: "Evaluating the response and quality of intelligence products."

The major problem that occurred to me as I read the terms of reference is the following. The NSCIC is primarily a consumer committee that is to provide guidance to the intelligence community regarding consumer needs and to provide for the review and evaluation of intelligence products. On the other hand the current Working Group membership is at least one-half made up of producers, five to five, excluding you as Chairman. The terms of reference indicate that the decisions are to be made by consensus. Given the membership balance of the Working Group and consensus decision making procedures may not the Working Group have some problems in assisting the NSCIC in carrying out its assigned tasks?

I do not know the answer to this question and I might like to discuss it with you. Having started as we have, it is certain to be awkward at this point to make major changes in the membership of the Group. Certainly it is of value to have the production people there to discuss problems as they arise. But consensus decision making is an elusive process and it is difficult to assess the impact on decisions of the current balance in the Working Group membership. Should there

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be a clear cut difference of opinion, principally along a split of consumers as contrasted with producers on some issues, it would raise awkward problems. I feel, however, that things have worked reasonably well so far. In any case, something worth thinking about is the matter of the most appropriate decision process for the Working Group.

At lunch the other day I mentioned to you the general feeling I have that we still do not have a handle on the problem of assisting the NSCIC to provide guidance as to the needs of the top level policy makers. I am less concerned than you about the problem of the distortion of top level policy makers' judgments in the process of having him provide guidance. I do not believe that one has to force them to provide guidance, but rather we have to find ways to make it easier for them to respond. For example, Bill Hyland suggested a few days ago it might be good if major collectors or program managers formulated their needs for guidance and had the top level people respond. When faced with a more concrete formulation of what is needed, they might provide the really necessary guidance. They may be more able to respond to well formulated specific issues than they are to produce de novo comprehensive guidance for the intelligence community. In any case, I am not certain that we have exhausted, or even tried many devices, to make it easy for the top level people to give their judgments on the relative importance of policy issues and intelligence needs.

Earlier I raised the possible value to the NSCIC principals of a descriptive study of the current working of the requirements process and other influences upon the allocation of collection resources. What guidance is now available to the community? What perceptions do they now have of the needs of top level decision makers? With a more specific picture before them of the current working of the community, they might better see how they can help to supply the most needed guidance.

Sincerely,



A. W. MARSHALL
Director, Net Assessment
Group

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